



# Recycling and Waste Reduction

KEEPING MILWAUKEE CLEAN AND GREEN

Fall 2022

City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works • [MilwaukeeRecycles.com](http://MilwaukeeRecycles.com) • 414-286-CITY (2489)

## Thank You For Recycling, Milwaukee!

You finish a can of soda, give it a rinse, and throw it into the recycling cart. It can feel like a small action, but it has a big impact!

From January through June of this year, City of Milwaukee residents recycled over 25,851,000 pounds of material through our curbside recycling program and in 2021, residents recycled 52,956,000 pounds! When we all participate in the program and recycle accepted materials (no wishcycling, please!), the results can be extraordinary.

### Does Recycling Make a Difference?

According to the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries' (ISRI) "2021 Economic Impact Study for the U.S.-Based Recycling Industry," Wisconsin's economy benefitted greatly from recycling in the state.

- **Economic Impact:** \$4,600,650,100
- **Total Jobs:** 20,129
- **Total Wages:** \$1,320,463,900
- **Taxes:** \$430,442,100

Recycling supports American manufacturing as the items you recycle today are the valuable materials needed to make tomorrow's products. When you see a box, a bottle, paper, a t-shirt, carpet, etc. that contains post-consumer recycled content, that is possible because of you and your recycling cart!

In addition to recycling's benefits on our local economy, it also provides environmental benefits as well.



**Saves energy**



**Conserves natural resources such as timber, water, and minerals**



**Prevents pollution by reducing the need to collect new raw materials**



**Reduces the amount of waste sent to landfills and incinerators and associated emissions.**

Whether it's a can or carton, box or bottle, jar or paper – all of these accepted materials should be recycled every time

to keep the benefits of the recycling industry in motion. So where do we go from here? How can we continue to improve our recycling program?

### Know Before You Throw

While it's important to recycle all accepted materials all the time, it's also incredibly important to avoid throwing non-accepted material into our recycling carts. When you have an item you're not quite sure about, it can feel like the right thing to throw it into the recycling cart just in case. However, this wishcycling causes a lot of contaminants to enter the recycling stream which are very detrimental to the system. These non-accepted materials create downtime and damage in facilities, cause safety hazards for workers, and make the process more costly to operate. Learn what can and can't be recycled curbside by visiting [MilwaukeeRecycles.com](http://MilwaukeeRecycles.com) and visit [Milwaukee.gov/DropOff](http://Milwaukee.gov/DropOff) to find even more items available for composting and recycling through Drop Off Centers. Thank you, Milwaukee!

## Thank You For Recycling These!



**Cans**



**Aluminum and Steel Cans**  
empty and rinse



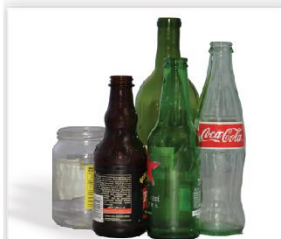
**Cartons**



**Food and Beverage Cartons**  
empty and replace cap



**Glass**



**Bottles and Jars**  
empty and rinse



**Paper**



**Cereal Boxes, Newspaper, Magazines & Mail, Flattened Cardboard, and Paper Tubes**



**Plastic**



**Kitchen, Laundry, Bath: Bottles and Containers**  
empty and replace cap  
(#1△, #2△, #5△)





# Let's Mulch, Milwaukee!

When residents find their yards blanketed in leaves, the City's Fall Leaf Collection can be a major help in clearing out. However, have you wondered why it's important to have a program for leaves and if there's another way that we as residents can help? We're here to help with that!

## Lake Effect, Meet Leaf Effect

Did you know? When left to their own devices, leaves can clog storm drains and cause road flooding. When they make it into our waterway, decaying leaves block out sunlight and release nitrogen which can negatively impact water quality and the health of aquatic life. Therefore, it's important to have a robust plan for the seasonal leaf drop.

Leaves collected through the City's Fall Leaf Collection program are taken to the Waste Management compost site where Purple Cow Organics manages the material for 4 - 6 months to create a rich compost. Compost is then sold locally. Compost is a natural fertilizer that returns nutrients to the soil, improves its ability to absorb rain water, and keeps valuable resources out of the landfill.



While this process helps create a beneficial material, it's also a resource-intensive process requiring additional seasonal staff-time and heavy equipment with associated fuel emissions.

Increasingly unpredictable weather patterns also lead to extended leaf dropping timelines and the potential for freezes and snow which can further complicate this City-wide project. What can we do to accommodate leaves dropping when they please and reduce the financial and environmental demands of the program?

Mulching as close to 100% of your leaves on-site is the ultimate goal and we can work up to that. We have several tips for you to try that can fit any yard. A big thank you to our friends in Bloomington, IN for sharing their advice and the excellent results from their own 1,000 Households Who Mulch pilot which has been growing in size ever since.



## Mow Leaves

- **Use your lawn mower, and mow over the leaves in your yard (where possible).**
- **Mow once you have a thin layer of leaves over your lawn. This will mean mowing multiple times as the leaves fall, possibly weekly during the season.**
- **Chop leaves into ½" pieces (dime-sized). You may need to make more than one pass over the leaves to get the pieces small enough**

## Mower Settings

- **No special lawn mower supplies are necessary.**
- **Set the mower height on the highest setting.**
- **For a lawn mower with a side outlet, you should cover the side outlet so the chopped leaves are directed back down to the yard, instead of to the side.**
- **You can use a special mulching blade, however it is not necessary.**



## Collecting and Distributing Leaves on Your Lawn

- **String trimmer in a trash can method:**  
Place your string trimmer into the bottom of an empty trash can. Fill the can with leaves. Use the string trimmer as you would an immersion blender to chop up the leaves.
- **Mower with bag method:**  
Rather than mulching leaves into your lawn, attach the catchment bag to your mower and collect leaf mulch in the bag.
- **Chop leaves on the driveway method:**  
Rake the leaves to your driveway, mow over them to chop them up, then rake or sweep them up.
- **Leaf blower/vacuum mulcher method:**  
Fit your leaf blower with the vacuum attachment and bag. Vacuum the leaves to shred them into mulch, and collect mulch in the bag.



## Composting Leaves

- **Chop up leaves before adding to your compost bin. This will take up less space and facilitate decomposition, allowing you to compost many more leaves than if they are left whole.**
- **Use an existing compost bin or create a new pile for chopped leaves only. Turn this occasionally, and by spring you should be able to use the compost to augment your soil for spring planting.**

Hopefully, these tips and tricks have inspired you to give mulching a try this fall! Our Fall Leaf Collection Program will still be here to help. **More information can be found at [Milwaukee.gov/Leaves](https://Milwaukee.gov/Leaves).**

Learn about other City of Milwaukee yard waste programs and management tips at [Milwaukee.gov/YardandFoodWaste](https://Milwaukee.gov/YardandFoodWaste).



# 2022 Fall Leaf Collection and Brush Request Reminders

Leaves, brush, weeds, garden trimmings, and other yard waste are banned from landfills and must NOT be placed in garbage or recycling carts.

## Fall Leaf Collection: Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> – Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>

During the fall rake-out period (**Oct. 1 – Nov. 15**), the City collects leaves for composting which conserves natural resources, saves money, and protects water quality by reducing leaves entering storm sewers.

### How Should I Rake Out My Leaves?

- ✓ Loose into the street with a one foot gap between the leaves and the curb
- ✓ Away from storm drains and sewer grates
- ✓ Add garden trimmings and weeds on top.
- ✓ Separate from brush piles. Brush is not to be placed in the street.
- ✗ Do NOT include grass clippings, pumpkins, litter, or bagged material.



*Leaves and brush properly set out for collection*

**No special request** for leaf collection is necessary from Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> – Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>. Leaf collection operations cycle through the city systematically. At all other times of the year, leaves must be mulched on the property or taken to a Drop Off Center.

### DATES TO REMEMBER

October 1, 2022 . . . . . Fall leaf rake-out begins  
November 15, 2022 . . . . . Fall leaf rake-out ends  
November 27, 2022 . . . . . Winter Drop Off Center hours begin  
December 5, 2022 . . . . . Winter collection schedule begins  
December 1, 2022 . . . . . Winter parking regulations begin  
April 1, 2023 . . . . . Brush collection begins  
April 3, 2023 . . . . . Summer collection schedules begin  
April 9, 2023 . . . . . Summer Drop Off Center hours begin

Visit [Milwaukee.gov/Snow](https://www.milwaukee.gov/Snow) to learn about City of Milwaukee Snow and Ice Control Operations and to sign up for winter parking alerts. Snow and ice must be cleared off of and around garbage and recycling carts.

### Brush Collection: April – November (by request)

The City collects household brush piles of 2 cubic yards or less from April – November by special request. Brush consists of woody trimmings from trees and shrubs.

- Cut brush down to size. No branch should be longer than 4 feet or larger than 6 inches in diameter
- Place a pile up to the size of a couch between the curb and the sidewalk for collection
- Request collection online at [Milwaukee.gov/ClickForAction](https://www.milwaukee.gov/ClickForAction) or call (414) 286-CITY

## Know Before You Throw (and Buy) – A Note From Milwaukee Recycles

On a trip with the Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin (AROW), my fellow solid waste colleagues from across the state and I were touring Dynamic Lifecycle Innovations in Onalaska. Dynamic is a registered recycler in the E-Cycle WI program, which means they participate in our state's electronics recycling law by working with municipalities to safely and securely recycle electronics for residents. City of Milwaukee residents can learn

more about this program in the Safe Disposal Reminder below. As we finished our tour and stream of questions for our hosts, a member asked Dynamic "what items are you most worried about." They immediately pointed to the Fitbit on my wrist and said, "that." The impending onslaught of wearable devices and items with built-in batteries reaching the end of their useful life is just one conundrum for solid waste experts. The pace of new

product development is rapid, but safe disposal methods aren't always an upfront consideration. I was humbled by the realization that I purchased without really knowing where it would go when I was done with it. When making a purchase, ask "do I know where this goes when I'm done? Can I reuse, donate, recycle?" I know I will. You can find safe disposal information for several unique materials in the section below.

## Safe Disposal Reminders

**Does this bring joy?**  
NO? DROP IT OFF.

Year-round Drop-off  
**HOME HAZMAT COLLECTION**

**MMSD** | For more information visit [mmsd.com](https://www.mmsd.com) | MKE County Residents Only

**Where do I recycle plastic bags and films?**

NOT curbside

Find a store drop off near you at [PlasticFilmRecycling.org/drop-off](https://PlasticFilmRecycling.org/drop-off)

**Electronics Recycling**

TVs, computers, monitors, and PC components must be recycled. Crews will NOT collect these items curbside.

Please recycle at a Drop Off Center. Proof of residency or property ownership required. 3 TVs maximum.

Learn more at [www.milwaukee.gov/Electronics](https://www.milwaukee.gov/Electronics)





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**City of Milwaukee**  
**Department of Public Works**  
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## Follow Us!

Take the pledge to be a better recycler and opt in to e-notify for important events and updates from Milwaukee Recycles.

[Milwaukee.gov/RecycleContact](https://Milwaukee.gov/RecycleContact)



@MilwaukeeRecycles



@MKERecycles

## NO COLLECTIONS ON CITY HOLIDAYS:

**THANKSGIVING:** November 24 & 25, 2022

**CHRISTMAS:** December 23 & 26, 2022

**NEW YEAR'S DAY:** January 2, 2023

**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY:** January 16, 2023

**GOOD FRIDAY:** April 7, 2023

**MEMORIAL DAY:** May 29, 2023

**INDEPENDENCE DAY:** July 4, 2023

**LABOR DAY:** September 4, 2023

Collection days shift after each holiday. Review your schedule online at

[Milwaukee.gov/CollectionDay](https://Milwaukee.gov/CollectionDay)

❄️ Service may be delayed due to snow and ice control operations ❄️



## GET TO KNOW YOUR DROP OFF CENTERS

- **North** - 6660 N Industrial Road - *must enter Industrial Road from Mill Road*
  - **South** - 3879 W Lincoln Avenue

### Summer Hours

April 10- November 26, 2022  
 Tuesday – Sunday 7 AM – 3 PM  
 Monday CLOSED

### Winter Hours

November 27-April 8, 2023  
 Tuesday – Saturday 7 AM – 3 PM  
 Sunday – Monday CLOSED

## ACCEPTED MATERIALS

Recycled		Composted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Antifreeze</li> <li>Car batteries</li> <li>Motor oil and filters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appliances</li> <li>Scrap Metal</li> <li>Asphalt Shingles</li> <li>Concrete</li> <li>Cooking oil</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brush and branches,</li> <li>Grass clippings,</li> <li>Garden debris,</li> <li>Leaves, and Logs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electronics (up to 3 TVs, \$5/ each)</li> <li>Tires (up to 5 passenger tires)</li> <li>Recyclables accepted curbside</li> <li>Large corrugated cardboard</li> </ul>		<b>Landfilled</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Garbage</li> <li>Old furniture and mattresses</li> <li>Construction or remodeling debris</li> </ul>

# DO NOT BAG Recyclables



## WANT A COLLECTION DAY REMINDER?

Did you know you can sign up for text messages to remind you of your garbage and recycling collection dates? Register an account and login at [Milwaukee.gov/Enotify](https://Milwaukee.gov/Enotify). Once logged into your account, click on the "Subscriptions" drop down and select "Text Messaging." After adding your phone number, and entering the confirmation code sent to your phone, click "Text Messaging" again. Add your address under "Sanitation Notifications" section. You will receive text messages to remind you of your garbage and recycling pick up dates the day before your collection.

